# Article

# The EU and NATO Enlargement and Central Europe under the Influence of the USA

— The Role of Poland in the EU and the Iraq War<sup>1</sup>—

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#### Introduction

This year, in the second half of 2011, Poland becomes a presidency of the European Union under the New Lisbon Treaty. Poland is a specific country in Central Europe, which is strongly pro-US and supported the Iraq War in 2003, and is called "New Europe" compared to Old Europe like Germany and France, as well as a "Trojan Horse" in the EU as the pro-US country. During the difficulties of the Lisbon Treaty, Poland and the President of the Czech Republic postponed the ratification of the Treaty, so not only Ireland, but also Central European middle powers felt skeptical about the Lisbon Treaty.

The author investigates the Central Eastern European (CEE, henceforth) policy under the influence of the US, especially focusing on the Polish role in and after the Iraq War in 2003–2005. This period is the important turning point of the difficult relations between the West and East in the European Union, and the influence of the US and NATO

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<sup>1</sup> About another article, Kumiko Haba "NATO Enlargement and the Iraq War under the Influence of the US", a book has already been published: Russia and NATO: New Areas for Partnership, St. Petersburg State University Press, 2004. On the Enlargement of the EU and NATO towards Central European countries, the author investigated and wrote about 10 articles and books, which are written on the last page of the reference.

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toward the New countries in the EU. It brought the EU a new Policy from the Integration among Diversity, to centralized and democratized one-voice EU under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP, henceforth), under the Lisbon Treaty, but its future is not so much stable.

To consider the future of the Lisbon Treaty under the two presidencies by Hungary and Poland, it would be helpful to investigate the EU/NATO Enlargement and CEE policy during the Iraq War, and also to know when and how the differentiation started between the West and East in Europe.

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The great celebration of the Enlarged EU of 25 countries was held in Dublin, Ireland on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004. Europe, which had been divided into two, was integrated at last, 59 years after the end of the Second World War. The European integration was limited to the influence of the Christian countries (Catholic and Protestant) at that time; however, Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007, and Croatia also wishes to join, moreover, the "Western Balkan" countries aim to join around 2015—.

In these 60 years, "New Europe", namely Eastern Europe stayed under the other System of the Soviet Union in the Cold War, but joined the European System, the EU and NATO at last. These countries developed quickly in these 10 years after the setback of the transition period, and the top group of these countries is surpassing Korea, Portugal, and Greece in GDP per capita in the statistics of 2002.

Many of the new members are relatively small countries, but the exception is Poland (with a population of 38 million), which is comparable to Spain.

How are the characteristics of the EU changing by the affiliation of the 10 countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Mediterranean? And especially what role does Poland take, which stands out in CEE countries after the Iraq War, between the US and the EU?

In this article, the author wishes to investigate and analyze the relations between the Enlarged EU and new members, especially focusing

The EU and NATO Enlargement and Central Europe under the Influence of the USA on Poland.

### 1. The Confidence of Poland

The International symposium on the Enlarging EU was held at Waseda University in Tokyo in September 2003, one year after 9/11, and Verheugen, the Chair of the European Commission as well as Danuta Hubner, the Polish EU Enlargement Minister were invited. Hubner had a lecture with the title "How can the 10 new countries' joining change the EU?", and showed her confidence and aggressiveness.

After the lecture a question was asked from the floor to Hubner: "Why does Poland support the US in the Iraq War, although you are just before the affiliation to the EU?" Verheugen interrupted this question, and said: "The EU has to appreciate Poland, because it built a bridge between the EU and the US". Hubner answered: "He said the best answer, which I really wanted to say." Many people in the audience were surprised by Verheugen's answer, and felt that Poland got a high position by supporting the US.

During these several years, Poland became a storm center in the relations between the US and the EU, although until then it had a quite low position among the candidate countries, because of the difficult achievement of the 31 criteria of the EU. When the author joined the International Conference for Peace in St. Petersburg in early September 2003, just after the Iraq War, many scholars discussed about Poland as "the Trojan Horse". One Russian scholar criticized that Poland became an American poodle; however, the author and a Swedish scholar said that Poland rather wished to use the US power, and tried to shake out the European Big Power, and many people agreed with us.<sup>3</sup> After the conference, The author went around Kaliningrad, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, and visited the European Commission in Brussels last. When the author went to the European Commission, she noticed that there was a big panel in the Lobby on which there was a text about Poland, a Big

<sup>2</sup> International Conference at Waseda University, 25 September 2003.

<sup>3</sup> International Conference at St. Petersburg University, 6-8 September 2003.

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country, with a population of 38 million, and so on. In the European Commission and the European Policy Center (EPC), many experts indicated how they had to treat Poland in the following years.

Thus, the behavior of Poland attracts people's attention all over the world just after the Iraq War.

# 2. The Iraq War and the Change of relations between the US and the EU — The Role of Poland —

The Enlargement of the EU and NATO worked together like the two wheels of a locomotive until 1999–2001. But just after 9/11, and the Bombing of Afghanistan to the Iraq War, the Bush government of the US changed its position of Security Policy to aggressive military campaign, which contained first strike against international terrorism in the Bush Doctrine in September 2003.<sup>4</sup> After that, the security policy of the US and that of the EU opposed each other in international politics. Most of the EU countries were more precautious about using military power outside of the guarding territory.

However, just at the time when international public opinion strongly supported France and Germany's anti-war policy, and hoped for the UN's sanction against Iraq, 8 countries in Europe (the UK, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Portugal, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) on 30 January 2003, and 10 countries, the so-called "Vilnius 10" (East and South European countries) on 4 February declared that they supported the US decision to attack Iraq.<sup>5</sup>

By this declaration, Europe was divided into two; those who supported and those who did not support the Iraq War. Affirmatives of the Iraq War were 7 countries, negatives were 4, and neutrals were 4 among the 15 EU countries. Therefore, French and German leaders became the minority. On the other hand, the future member countries, including Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey supported the US. Only Malta and Cyprus were neutral; so 11 applicants of the EU supported the US. The

<sup>4</sup> Bush Doctrine, 11 September 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Népszabadság, 30 January and 4 February 2003.

Enlarging Europe, which has a population of 450 million and a GDP of 10 milliard dollars, found itself not integrated anymore, and the CFSP didn't work.

Why did Poland and CEE support the US? There were particular pragmatisms as well as historical and social connections.

One reason is the historical memory. The US always helped CEE, when they were in crisis historically, so they cannot deny the US demand. It has no connection with President Bush's policy. The second reason is that they could not reject the US's ask, because they were ready to join to NATO in 2004 ("not the EU, because it is far enough", said the Romanian authorities).6 Thirdly, there is a million of East European emigrants in the US, and they make a big Lobby there. Fourthly, there is a so-called "Euro skepticism" toward the EU, because of the severe criteria for joining the EU, which are analyzed in following Chapter 6. The fifth and the last reason is another historical memory of occupation and devastation of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Army, which invaded and ruled their countries in the nearest past. So their security defense is not connected to the EU, but to the US and the NATO. They are not directly connected to the Iraq Attack but to such special consideration to the US which made them put a signature on the declaration.

However, after the declaration, each country's behavior was different from each other. Poland became more Americophile, while on the other hand, Hungary and the Czech Republic visited Germany and France, and explained that their support to the US was not criticism of the EU, but they wanted to avoid the rupture between the US and the EU.

Chirac, the President of France criticized CEE governments as "their behavior was childish!", and it had a bad influence on CEE countries. So he and Schröder had to apologize to these countries that there is no serious connection between supporting the US and the EU Enlargement, so "people do not need to be afraid of it". So CEE countries admitted their justification and their superiority to European Big powers by supporting

<sup>6</sup> Romanian authority in Japan, September 2003.

the US. But this behavior brought the conflict inside and between CEE governments and people in each country because public opinion didn't want to dispatch soldiers to such dangerous places.

## 3. The national interest of Poland by supporting the US

Among CEE countries, especially Poland got a very high position and had great interests.

- They got the position of the assistant to the Secretary-General of NATO, and the Chairman of the International Regulation Committee.
- They got the commander position to lead the 21 countries' 9200 soldiers (from Europe, Asia, and Latin America) in Iraq from September 2003.
- 3) They had a strong negotiation power in the "Weimar Triangle", which is constituted by German, French and Polish prime ministers and foreign ministers, by using the pressure of the US in the background.
- 4) They had oil interests by their companies in Iraq, dispatched unemployed officers and soldiers, getting the subsidies for dispatch by the US.<sup>7</sup>

So they could get a really big merit.

On the other hand, the US also got a great merit to influence CEE. They got a foothold in Europe, and put pressure on the European Big countries. The new members of the NATO had to fulfill the obligation to the Military cooperation, Armament modernization and purchases, and the Military budget had to be raised until 2% of the GDP. These things gave the US a really great merit.

One more characteristic is the relation between the NATO Enlargement and the War. The NATO enlargement toward 3 countries of CEE in 1999 was strongly connected with the Kosovo Bombing. The enlargement decision was always connected to the US demand to cooperation with the real Military operations in Kosovo, the Afghanistan Bombing

<sup>7</sup> CEE Fax News, January to September, 2003.

and the Iraq War.

During the last decision of the NATO Enlargement toward 7 countries in November 2002, the US strongly demanded these countries to dispatch and cooperate in the Iraq War, even though many of these countries were reluctant to join. But as the violence of the combat began to bring the death of soldiers by terror and casualties of each country, the national public opinion began to demand the withdrawal very strongly.

# 4. The Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe

## — Conflict inside Europe —

One more important Conflict between European Big powers and new members is the Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The European Convention on the drafting of the Constitutional Treaty was held from February 2002 to June 2003, and the Draft Treaty was to be adopted in the Convention by the leadership of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Chairman of the Convention in June-July 2003. However, the consultation broke down, and it was not adopted even in December 2003.

The Draft Treaty was prepared because after Maastricht the EC was changed to EU, and through revisions of the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties, it became very complicated and incomprehensible to citizens. Therefore, they tried to make the treaty more simple, efficient, and understandable for citizens, under the 25–30 countries' EU.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, to integrate the Enlarged EU, the Draft Treaty offered simplicity, decentralization, democratization and efficiency. However, the biggest problem occurred in efficiency. It aimed at putting a permanent Chair (President) and a Foreign Minister in the EU, as well as double majority decision, and fixation of quorum of Commission members, even

<sup>8</sup> Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, The European Convention, 18 July 2003. And the EU homepage: http://europa.eu.int/futurum/constitution/index\_en.htm

As analysis of the Constitution for Europe, Katsuhiro Shoji, "Summary and Evaluation of Draft Treaty establishing Constitution for Europe", Kaigaijijo, October 2003.

if the countries' number increases. By doing this, they tried to make a united, strong and intelligible EU, so as not to perplex proceeding by the differences of many opinions over 30 countries' EU in the future.

However, many small and new countries strongly opposed to this proposal. Especially Poland and Spain manifested repetitiously their concern and precaution to this Draft Treaty. The biggest apprehensions of these two countries were the double majority decision, and the decrease of their own votes. But other countries like Northern Europe and CEE countries were also anxious that this Draft Treaty would neglect the small countries' opinion more than the Niece treaty. (I would like to explain more, but in another panel, there has already been a discussion about the Draft Treaty, so it is better that I move on from this theme now.)

So the question is about an efficient and strongly integrated EU or a diversified and democratic EU. This is a very difficult question. Gerhard Schröder said if we failed to adopt the Constitution for Europe, it would result in the birth of a Europe of two different speeds. I cannot understand what it means. On the other hand, new members including Northern Europe have some misgivings that Europe would be divided into two by this Constitution, into big and old countries and small and new countries. The rights and interests guaranteed under a small difference by the Nice Treaty were made smaller by the Draft Treaty.

The New members demanded a New EU, which is strong toward outside, and guarantees the rights and diversities inside. Lastly, both intensions were adjusted in the EU summit on 17–18 June 2004. Poland asserted that it would continue to oppose it, if the offer was not acceptable in the middle of June. However, the division of the EU was evaded, and the Constitution for Europe was adopted successfully at last.

# 5. The Election of the European Parliament — Conflict of Government and Citizens —

On 10–13 June 2003, the first election of the European Parliament was held in the Enlarged EU of 25 countries, competing for all 732 seats in Europe. And it brought a big change. Christian Democrats won 276

seats, while Social Democrats 201, Liberals 66, Green 42, Left 39, Right and Nationalists 27, various parties and nonpartisan 81 seats. The poll percentage was extremely low, the average of all member countries was 45%, and that of new members was only 28%. The Government party was defeated in many countries, and Conservatives, nationalists, and Liberal parties won, and the Radical Right also got votes. This trend was more distinguished in CEE. Not many citizens of new members went to the poll, only one third of the voters, and many of them voted for the opposition parties.<sup>9</sup>

Poland was distinguished. The Polish government party (SLD) got only 5 out of 54 seats. The two agrarian parties, Self-Defense and Family Alliance against the EU got 16 seats. The opposition got 46 seats altogether. The Support of the Miller government was only 5%, when they joined the EU on 1 May 2004, and resigned the following day. But the Belka new government couldn't recover their popularity either. In other countries, opposition parties got majority, except in Slovakia (See Table).

Why didn't people in CEE go to the election, or voted for the opposition party and anti-EU party, even though they could affiliate the EU?

As a trend of EU citizens in both the East and West, one reason is that it was difficult for general people to know the merit of the Enlargement. Generally, the cost of Enlargement burdened them. The second reason is the strong distrust of the government, especially because of the Iraq War and people's dispatch to Iraq. The third reason is the conflict between the EU interest and national interest, like agrarian subsidies, emigrants' policy and financial problems because the characteristic trend of CEE was the increasing economic differences from the West, difficulty of employment, diminishing social security, and sacrifice to citizens. These things were brought from most of the costs of affiliation countries by the EU enlargement.

Therefore, these problems were a strong criticism from CEE, because

<sup>9</sup> About the distribution of votes of the European Parliament, see the EU homepage: http://www.elections2004.eu.int/ep-election/sites/en/results1306/index.html

even though they joined the EU, they could not feel getting real European citizenship. On the other hand, Western citizens were afraid that cheap Eastern labour would increase their unemployment and security deterioration. So the citizens of both West and East, in both old and new member countries felt distance from the Enlarged EU, distrust in their own government, and mistrust regarding people on the other side.

# Problems of the EU Enlargement — National Interests and EU interests —

In the background of mutual distrusts, there existed the differences between national interests and EU interests. It means the problems of CAP (especially the direct payment to farmers) and immigrants' policy.

The problem of agrarian subsidies is the most important and long term conflict issue, because interests are completely different among vested interests like in France and Spain, a contributor like Germany, and new demanders of subsidies, like CEE. Especially in Poland, agrarian farmers occupy 30% of the population, so they eagerly hoped agrarian subsidies from the EU. But the direct payment for farmers, which was offered by the EU was only a quarter of the normal payment for the first year. That payment increases 5% each year, and they can get 100% of payment only 10 years later, in 2013. The author had comments on television on the day of the Celebration of the Enlarged EU on 1 May 2004, and just at that time a BBC Video was also showed, in which Polish young farmers tore the EU's subsidies offer documents, and said: "Don't mock us!".

So against this offer of the EU, strict criticism came out one after another from new member countries, so a new offer added 30%, from their own government and regional subsidies at the last negotiation in December 2003. Nevertheless, it is yet only 55% of normal subsidies, even though it was increased by their own government's help. Polish farmers urged the EU: "Austrian farmers got 100% subsidies when they joined to the EU. Why do you give us only a quarter or half? Because we are poor?!".

In new member countries there are many farmers who borrow heavily

from a bank because they have to fit the EU's many criteria and standards, so it is said that approximately one third of the farmers might have gone bankrupt after joining the EU. Under these circumstances, Self-Guard and Family Alliance, which is constituted by young and radical farmers, got many seats in the new European Parliament. It was a very severe situation for Polish people.

Another big problem was immigrants' policy. German and Austrian governments were very much cautious of and guarded against the immigrants from the East, Poland and other Slavic countries. It was said that already approximately 1 million irregular immigrants had come into the EU countries, which have borders with Eastern countries. Therefore, even though these countries joined the EU, the immigrants were restricted until 2+3+2 years, namely 7 years longer by older members.

Against such a measure, some new member countries said that they also wished to shut out the Western companies and money, if Western countries shut out their Eastern immigration, because "free movement" did not completely work. For new members, Western behavior, which wished to defend their vested interests and working market, looked like EU protectionism and double standard compared to 1995 when neutral countries joined the EU. And they were anxious about the "Fixation of difference between the developed West and undeveloped East". The Enlarged EU has to solve these mutual distrusts, and has to make not only a strongly integrated EU, but also a multiple and diverse EU, even it is so difficult to establish.

# Epilogue: The perspective of the Enlarged EU

How will the Enlarged EU be able to work cooperating with new member countries?

The most important thing is mitigation of conflicts and searching for compromise and real middle ground between the East and West about the CAP and immigrants' problems. Just about these problems, the opposition parties and radical parties occupied many seats in the European Parliament. These opinions could not overlook both the West and East sides, especially the stronger authority of the European Parliament

will be held in the future.

It is very difficult to find a compromise, because each demand looks like a real zero-sum game for CAP subsidies and immigrants-emigrants problems. But if there is no mutual regulation, the European Parliament might fall into confusion between EU interests and each government's national interests. Therefore, old countries and newcomers in the EU have to decrease the differences, and have to dissolve the mutual feeling of injustice in the long term.

The second thing is the conflict of the Draft Treaty making a Constitution for Europe, Strong Europe, or/and Democratic Europe. It is also a very complicated issue. On 17–18 June 2004, it was adopted to concede to smaller and middle countries, revising the percentage of the majority decision by the effort of the European Chair country. To do so, German and French leadership was limited a little, but seeing from the long term, the multilateral EU which is different from the US, will be highly estimated from all over the world. How can the Enlarged EU, which is constituted by more than 30 countries, be managed and organized efficiently and cooperatively? The coexistence between a strong, integrated system and a diversified and democratic system will be a completely important theme not only in the EU, but also in International Relations in post-Cold War era.

The third thing is relations with the US. The Enlarged EU power is comparable to the US power in Economics, International remarks, and especially in the international moral, which Charles Kupchan wrote in his book, *The End of the American Era*. CEE, the new members have a strong national identity, but also a strong European identity. They love democracy, equality, social security (and Christianity), too: so they might be a litmus paper, whether the Enlarged EU is really defending these European values, not only for their country, but also for all the European countries. Not becoming a Trojan Horse, these small and European identity countries making an integrated, multilateral, democratic, and diversified New Europe is one of the most important subjects for the Enlarged EU, from a Non-European Perspective of a Japanese scholar.

From July 2011, Polish Government eagerly wishes to perform his Presidency in the New European Union as a "Big Power" in the EU and the World.

The Eastern Partnership, trans-border policy between the EU and Russia, concretely Belarus, Ukraine, and other Central European countries collaborating with Sweden and Poland (border countries in the EU). They also collaborate with the Black See Regional Cooperation considering the collaboration with Middle East and Africa.

Therefore, Poland has always a fundamental strategy for their national interests among Germany, Russia, and the USA. The Iraq War was the one of the show case of the Polish strategy between the EU and the US. At that time, as I mentioned at first, they got the confidence as a "New Europe", and "Trojan Horse", not a poodle of the US, but *they USE* the EU and the US for their national interests, even though it is successful or not successful.

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